

Vermont State Board of Education Monthly Report – December 2007

From the Chair

At its meeting on December 18, 2007, the State Board of Education addressed the following topics:

Board's Desired State Public Engagement Process: Superintendents and School Board Members – Board members met during the afternoon of Tuesday, December 18, with approximately 35 superintendents and 18 school board members from around the state to continue its public engagement process regarding the future of education in Vermont. This discussion was kicked off by the October release of *The Future of Education in Vermont*, a ***transformation document** recently adopted by the State Board of Education. Facilitated by Department of Education staff members, participants were split into groups and asked to respond to three questions:

- *As you envision a transformed education system, what current practices should be included that best serve the needs of students?*
- *What new practices should be included?*
- *What questions, issues, suggestions does the document, **How are the Children?...** raise for you that you would want the State Board to be mindful of in its public policy role and as it moves forward toward next steps in this process?*

Discussion summaries can be seen at <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/mainboard.html>.

*The transformation document will serve as the means for conversation with constituent groups on the topic. Additional conversations with a broad range of constituent groups will be scheduled at subsequent Board meetings. In addition, plans are underway for the Commissioner to hold regional conversations with students and principals. To view the transformation document, go to http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/board/future_of_education/future_of_education.pdf.

Equal Education Opportunity Act (EEOA) Report – It is the State Board's responsibility, under 16 V.S.A. §164(18), "to evaluate the

equalizing effects of Vermont's education finance system and school quality standards... and to report to the general assembly concerning the results of this evaluation and recommendations for change if needed." The legislative purpose in requiring the periodic evaluation of equalizing effects is to ensure that all Vermont's students have access to a substantially equal educational opportunity. The statute requires the report every five years, or more often if requested by the General Assembly. The initial report was submitted in April 2001; the attached report, dated October 2007, covers the intervening years. To read the executive summary and the report, go to http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/board/packet_archives/packet_07_1218/item_H.pdf.

From the Board

Chair James read, and the board unanimously approved, a proclamation recognizing Sally Bouffard, the commissioner's private secretary, for her 43 years with the State of Vermont, Sally will be retiring on December 31, 2007.

From the Commissioner

Governance Report – Section 19 of Act 82 of 2007 directed the commissioner to submit a report, by December 1, 2007, to the legislature describing input received from the department's spring 2006 public engagement process on governance. The report includes recommendations for statutory changes related to the governance of Vermont's education system. To view the report and its recommendations, go to http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/laws/legislative_reports.html#act_82_sec_19.

Growth in Special Education Spending and High/Low Spending Reports – As required by 16 V.S.A. and Act 82 of 2007, the Board reviewed the report on the growth of special education spending and high/low spending special education school districts is required by Vermont statute and Act 82 of 2007.

Supervisory unions in the state were ranked according to special education spending and those that met the statutory definitions of high and low spending were noted in the report.

Information is provided for each supervisory union on factors that may influence special education costs, including special education teacher ratio, special education paraprofessional ratio, free and reduced lunch eligibility percentage, percentage of applicable Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators that met the state targets, percentage of placements in residential or separate schools, and percentage students with disabilities likely to require high cost programs. To review the information provided to the Board, go to http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/board/packet_archives/packet_07_1218/item_J.pdf.

From the Department

Department of Education Related Services

Orientation: January 18, Woodbury College, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. – Consultants who work for the I-TEAM, Vermont Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired are invited to join the special education consultants from the Department's Student Support Team for a day-long workshop covering a wide range of topics, including changes in special education regulations, the Vermont state performance plan and corresponding annual report to OSEP, as well as an opportunity to connect with Department staff on technical assistance questions. For further information, contact Nancy MacDonald (Nancy.MacDonald@state.vt.us; 828-5120).

Clinics for Peer Review Candidates –

The department offers monthly peer review clinics to provide support for candidates who are considering peer review as a route to educator licensure or who would like a consultation as they prepare their portfolios. Questions will be answered and exemplary portfolios will be available for candidates to view. Individual consultation also will be available. Clinics take place at the Vermont Department of Education, 120 State Street, Montpelier. Clinic attendance is required and candidates should register by e-mailing Wendy Anderson, Peer Review Consultant, at VtPeerReview@comcast.net or calling (802) 658-7970. Each session is limited to 15 candidates. Registration requests should include contact information as well as the endorsement being sought. Confirmation of registration will be sent by e-mail. Listings of currently scheduled clinics (including dates,

times and locations) are available at: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html>.

Educational Services Agencies (ESAs) –

ESAs are regional partnerships between school districts or supervisory unions, institutions of higher education and service providers. ESAs provide high quality professional development regionally to meet the needs of individuals, schools and/or supervisory unions to enable educators to improve schools and increase student learning. Use the link below to view regional professional development opportunities: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/prodev/resources.html#esa>.

Upcoming Events

For information on upcoming Department-sponsored events, see <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html>.

* * *

For more information on the Vermont State Board of Education, visit: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/mainboard.html>.

To view approved minutes of SBE meetings: <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/board/schedule.html#approved>

To view the State Board of Education's Monthly Reports: http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/board/schedule.html#monthly_reports

